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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Concord's Historic Robbins House To Be Moved
To Site Across From The North Bridge On Saturday, May 21**

**House Once Slated For Demolition Will Become Interpretative Center For
Concord's African and Abolitionist History**

Concord, MA (May 12) – Moving an historic house requires a vision, many meetings with town government agencies, an overwhelming number of permits, and patience. The Drinking Gourd Project, Inc. is pleased to announce that the Robbins House (circa 1830), built and inhabited by the descendants of Revolutionary War veteran and former Concord slavery survivor Caesar Robbins, will be returned closer to its original site across from The North Bridge and Old Manse on the morning of Saturday, May 21. The move will begin at 6 AM at 324 Bedford Road when the house is carefully loaded onto the back of a flatbed truck. By 8 AM the house will begin a ceremonious 2.2 mile journey through Concord Center and up Monument Street to its new home on land owned by the town of Concord and managed by the Minute Man National Historical Park.

Two years ago this unassuming brown house was saved from demolition when brought to the attention of The Drinking Gourd Project, a Concord-based nonprofit organization focused on raising awareness of the town's African and Abolitionist history from the 17th through the 19th centuries. "It has been our mission, in partnership with the Town of Concord, the National Park Service, and funded by Concord's Community Preservation Committee and generous donors," says Drinking Gourd Project President Maria Madison, "to create an interpretative center that offers residents and visitors a new layer to our understanding of our past and a deeper appreciation for the complexity of Concord and its role in creating a diverse America. The history of the house's ownership is a tangible reminder of the human spirit's ability to overcome adversity."

The Robbins House has been awarded the Toni Morrison Bench by the Road, the fifth such bench to be placed by the Toni Morrison Society in honor of the lives, experiences, and contributions of African slavery survivors in America. This bench will travel on the flatbed truck with the Robbins house and be installed in a temporary site by the Old Manse until construction is complete at the Robbins House site.(see www.tonimorrisonssociety.org/bench.html)

Architecturally, the Robbins House is a rare and well-preserved example of a one-room deep, five-bay, side-gabled cottage and is the only known existing dwelling in Concord built by the descendant of a formerly enslaved resident. It is believed that Peter Robbins, son of Caesar Robbins, built the house at the edge of Great Meadows. Three generations of the Robbins family occupied the house, and its history is rich with stories of debt, loss, reacquisition, and names strongly intertwined with Concord's abolitionist and transcendentalist history. In 1870, Irish-American immigrants purchased the house and moved it to its current location on Bedford Street.

Once the house is installed in its new site in the North Bridge parking lot, it will become The Robbins House Interpretive Center. It will be located just a short distance from The Minute Man statue by Daniel Webster French where it is quoted that "The Minute Man stands today as a powerful symbol of our continuing struggle for liberty. He also embodies a progress toward a true respect for the individual –the evolving legacy of the Revolution." The Robbins House Interpretive Center will be the latest addition to this landscape of respect for the legacy of the contributors to the Revolutionary War and the struggle for freedom.

Brooks Antislavery Cake, made by Minuteman Technical High School students according to the recipe created by Concord's leading 19th century abolitionist Mary Merrick Brooks and sold to raise funds for the Underground Railroad and other antislavery efforts, will be served at the Old Manse in celebration of this historic event.

May 21 Schedule of Events:

6:00-8:00 am: Lifting the house onto the flatbed, 324 Bedford St., Concord

8:00-9:00 am: Flatbed with house travels down Bedford St. to Town House, Monument Square, Concord

9:00-9:15 am: Flatbed with house stops for 15 minutes in front of Town House to receive donation check from Concord citizen Bill Barber

9:15-10:00 am: Flatbed with house travels down Monument St. to new site at 34 Monument St.

10:00 am: Musket Volley salute by Acton Minute Men upon the arrival of the house at the North Bridge parking lot

10:15-10:30 am: Dedication of Toni Morrison Society Bench by the Road takes place in front of Old Manse.

9:00-11:00 am: Brooks Antislavery Cake and coffee served in front of Old Manse

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